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AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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March 9, 2006

TO: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM:

J. Tyler McCauley
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – CHILDS' HOMES
FOR CHILDREN GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Childs' Homes for Children Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Childs' Homes for Children. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Childs' Homes for Children Group Home is a 6-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 12-18 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, the Group Home was providing services for six Los Angeles County Probation children.

The Group Home is located in the Fifth District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues, and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program

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services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address two deficient areas.

Childs' Homes for Children management needs to train and monitor all staff to always treat children fairly and with respect and dignity; and encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:asl

http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Paul Higa, Chief Probation Officer
Rufus Child, Executive Director, Childs' Homes for Children
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Childs' Homes for Children
7054 Vanscoy Avenue
North Hollywood, California 91605
Phone: (818) 759-6000
License Number: 197604969
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Childs' Homes for Children Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean, and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly, and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include long and short-term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities, and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

According to the Agency's management there are currently no children receiving psychotropic medication. This information is appropriately documented.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment –Interviews with children

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home, and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express an overall satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff, and report that most of the staff treats them with respect and dignity; however, the children stated that one of the staff members is often rude and unfair.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

- 1. Childs' Homes for Children management train and ensure that all staff treat children fairly and with respect and dignity, and monitor their interactions.**

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size for interviews: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

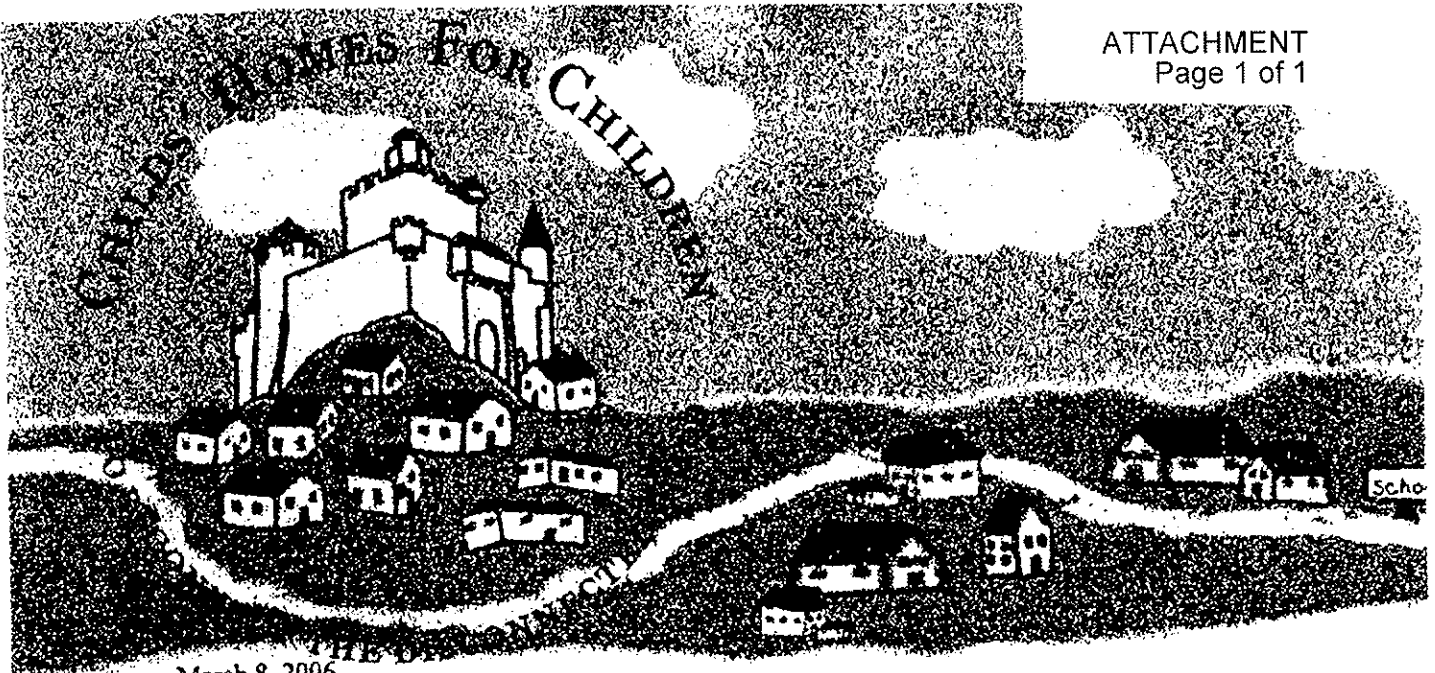
The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are not encouraged or assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

- 2. Childs' Homes for Children management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.**



V1. Personal Rights

Recommendation Page 4

1. Childs' Homes for Children Management train and monitor all staff to always Treat children fairly and with respect and dignity.

Response

The aforementioned staff is no longer employed with Childs' Homes for Children. All current staff is to participate in mandatory weekly training sessions regarding proper interaction and care of residents as per the facilities approved job description. These training sessions are facilitated by the Group Home's consultant who is fully certified and licensed psychologist.

V11. Clothing and Allowance

Recommendation Page 4

2. Childs' Homes for Children Management encourage and assist children in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Response

The current residents of Childs's Homes for Children are encouraged to bring family photos and keep photo albums for themselves. They are also encouraged to seek staff Assistance for ideas and possible resources for maintaining their albums/life books.


Rufus P. Childs; Executive Director